DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 329 462 SO 021 129

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TITLE The Amish in Indiana.
INSTITUTION University of Southern Indiana, Evansville.
SPONS AGENCY National Endowment for the Humanities (NFAH), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Jan 91
NOTE 37p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Amish; Cultural Education; Educational Resources; Elementary Education; Learning Activities; *Religious Cultural Groups; *Social Studies; Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS *Indiana

ABSTRACT

Four lesson plans for teaching elementary students about the Amish in Indiana are presented in this document. The lessons include: (1) using periodicals to learn about Amish life; (2) using the budget to learn about Amish life; (3) simulating a day in an Amish school; and (4) visiting the Amish. A 14-item list of resources for teaching about the Amish also is included. (DB)

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THE AMISH IN INDIANA

Lesson Plans

--Using Peiordicals to Learn About Amish LIfe

--Using The Budget to Learn About Amish Life

--Simulating a Day in an Amish School

--Visiting the Amish

--Resources for Teaching About the Amish

Isobel S. Arvin
Historic Southern Indiana Project
January 1991

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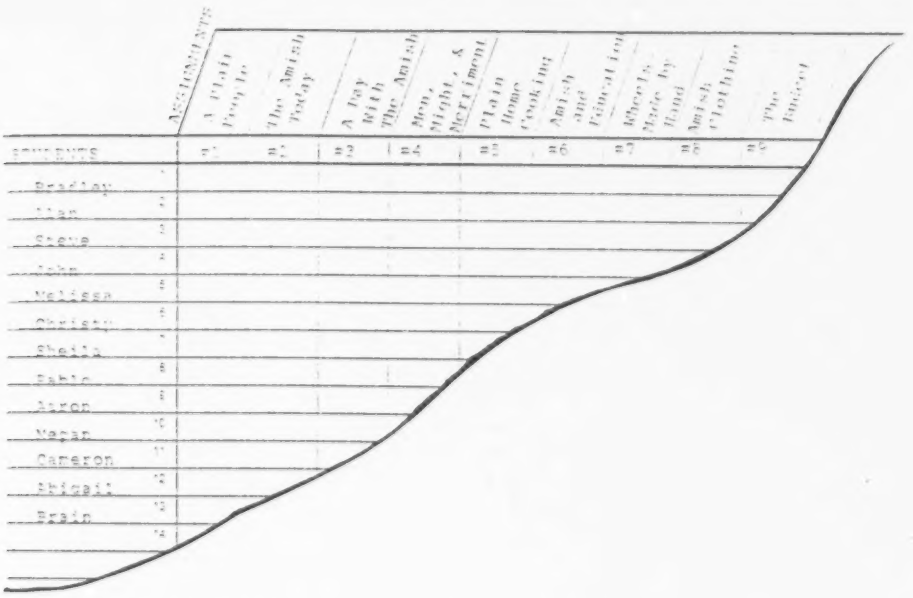
Using Periodicals to Learn about Amish Life

Much of what is written about the Amish appears in short articles or periodicals. One resource appropriate for elementary students is the history magazine Cobblestone, Volume 8, Number 11. Following is a strategy for using Cobblestone, or other similar resource materials.

OBJECTIVE: Students will read selected resources about the Amish and will take part in class discussions related to the unique aspects of Amish life.

ACTIVITIES: Secure two copies of the resource material. Cut apart the materials and place each article in a numbered and appropriately labeled folder. Attach a checklist to each folder:



Assign students to groups of three.

Groups will read and discuss the materials in each folder. The materials may be read in any order.

After a group completes reading and discussing the article, they check off their names on the checklist. The group can then select another folder.

Worksheets may be developed for each folder or open-ended assignments may be given. Examples:

--List ways that show how Amish life is different from "English" life.

--List questions you have about Amish life.

--List ways Amish people help each other.

--List things Amish people consider important.

After each reading session conduct a class discussion. Students will share information and will ask questions related to Amish culture. The teacher can share his/her knowledge of Amish life in response to student questions.

At the end of the series of class discussions, a quiz may be given covering the important concepts discussed.

Using The Budget to Learn About Amish Life

The Budget is a unique newspaper which allows the Amish to keep in close contact with other Amish communities. Every Amish community has a volunteer reporter who sends news to The Budget. Each week The Budget publishes more than 300 letters with news of births, deaths, weddings, accidents, social gatherings, farming activities, and even the weather. Eighteen thousand Amish and Mennonites in North and South America read The Budget each week.

In 1990 The Budget celebrated its 100th birthday. The paper is important to the Amish because they often have large families and do not always have time to write letters to those who have moved to other communities. Since they do not have telephones, The Budget serves as a means of learning news about friends and families miles away. A few Mennonite communities also report news, but mostly the articles relate to the Amish.

The Budget may be obtained for 50¢ a copy, plus handling charges, from 134 N. Factory Street, Sugar Creek, Ohio 44681 (216-852-4634).

Students can make many inferences about Amish life by reading The Budget.

OBJECTIVE: Students will read selected pages of The Budget and will compare and contrast the lifestyle of the Amish with the lifestyle of typical Americans.

ACTIVITIES: Secure 4 copies of The Budget (the average Budget is 20 pages long).

Cut the paper apart.

Assign students partners.

Give each pair of partners a page of The Budget.

Give each pair of partners a legal-sized sheet of paper marked off in sections with the following headings:

Amish Names	States where Amish live	Church Services	Farm work
	Size of Families	Baptisms	Weddings

Ads	Auctions or Benefits	Disasters and responses	School News
	Frolics	References to horses and buggies	Helping others

Or--as an alternative--develop class charts with the various headings.

As partners read their page or pages of The Pudget they will:

--List Amish names that appear repeatedly in the paper.

--List states where Amish settlements are located.

As students continue to read The Budget they will clip articles that will fit into the various categories to be pasted on the worksheets and/or charts.

Other categories that could be listed on the worksheets or charts are:

--Ordination of deacons

--Accounts of traveling via vans

--Illnesses cited

--Card showers

--Ways of making a living (other than farming)

--Young People's gatherings

--Quiltings or quilt auctions

--Incidents of persecution

--Mention of bench wagons

--Singings

--Accidents involving horses and buggies

--Amish recipes

--Remedies for health problems

--Amish view of "English" lifestyle
An interesting Amish comment on "English" life may be found in the 9/19/90 issue of The Budget (page 15).
"Started for home Thurs. afternoon and drove through severe thunder. Got home to find lots of trees down in our area, with electricity off until morning hours.

> Neighbors borrowed a kerosene lamp. It is really something how the world is handicapped by the lack of electricity. One feels very thankful that our lifestyle is simple enough to live without."

After the charts have been completed, take part in class discussions comparing and contrasting Amish lifestyle with the students' lifestyles. Make inferences about:

--Family size

--Importance of family

--Role of religion in the Amish family

--Ways Amish make a living

--Ways of living without use of electricity or motor vehicles

--Ways the Amish help each other

--Ways Amish enjoy life

--Problems faced by the Amish

Simulating a Day in an Amish School

Simulations are an effective way of helping students develop an understanding of another culture. In this simulation students will assume the role of an Amish child and will take part in school activities similar to those an Amish child might experience.

A useful resource in helping the teacher prepare for this activity is School Bells Ringing by Uria R. Byler. School Bells Ringing is a manual published for Amish teachers and parents. It is available from Pathway Publishing Corporation, R.R. 4 Box 266, Lagrange, IN 46761. The current price is $3.00.

The manual was used for the following plan. The history and spelling lessons are designed to teach concepts about Amish life using teaching stategies commonly used in Amish schools. The other lessons incorporate materials used by the Amish.

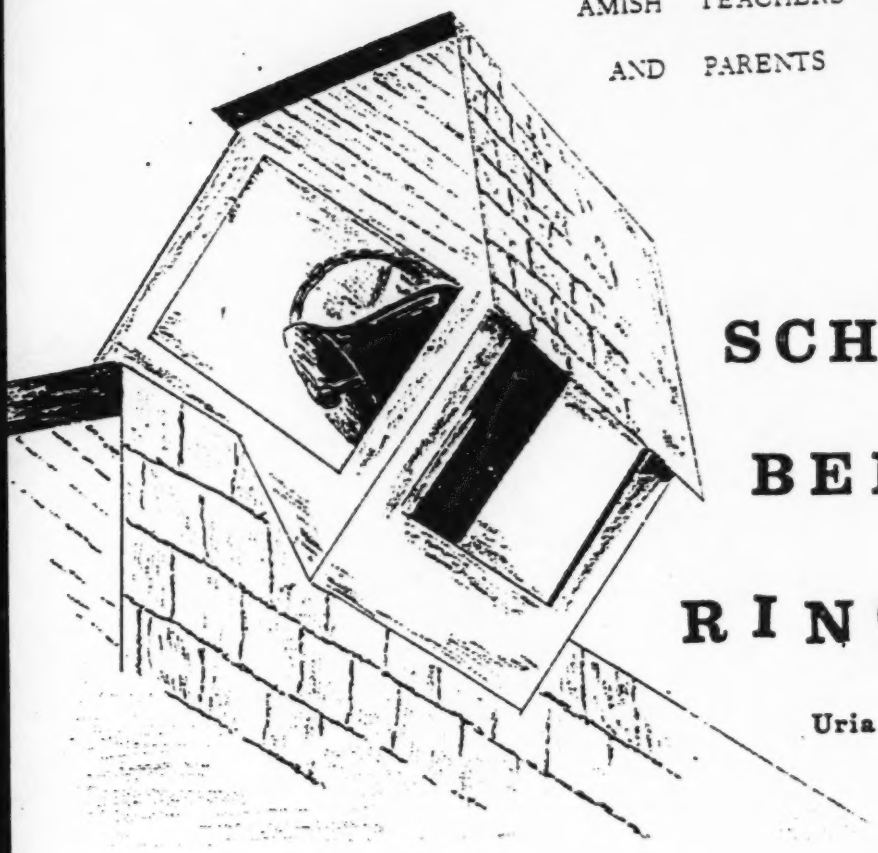
OBJECTIVE: Students will assume the role of an Amish child and will participate in a simulated day in an Amish school.

PREPARATION: To prepare students for participation in an Amish school day, they should be instructed to dress as plainly as possible. Boys should wear blue jeans and a dark shirt. Girls should wear plain dresses or plain skirts and blouses. It is helpful if the teacher dresses for the role. Students should be instructed to bring a lunch from home to be eaten in the classroom.

The classroom should be arranged in straight rows. The teacher's desk will be place in the front of the room. The teacher may want to use a bell.

Students should be prepared in advance for what will be expected of them discipline-wise. The following excerpt from School Bells Ringing can serve as a guide for establishing discipline.

A MANUAL FOR
AMISH TEACHERS
AND PARENTS



SCHOOL BELLS RINGING

Uria R. Byler

3. DISCIPLINE

The First Hurdle

It is not a coincidence that this chapter is placed in the front part of the book. Discipline is the first rung of the ladder to successful teaching. The best-educated teacher in the world can be a total failure if he cannot discipline. All the other talents that make a number one teacher are sadly wasted if he does not have the gumption, or the knowhow, or whatever the term may be, to run a well-mannered school.

Children are complex creatures. Basically they are loving, tenderhearted, affectionate, and well-intentioned individuals who will do anything in their power to please the teacher. When our Saviour said, "Suffer the children to come unto me," He gave us a valuable lesson. Those few words alone convey to us a message which is sometimes lost or mislaid when we talk about children. He did not consider them basically mean, mischievous, hard-to-handle, or He would never have spoken those words.

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The question now comes up, "Why then do some children misbehave as soon as the teacher's back is turned? Why do they talk back, get into fights, lie and cheat?"

We won't go into this subject of raising children, nor try to figure out their moods and behavior. It's too deep and mysterious and difficult to explain in a few words. We do wonder, however, if parents of school children realize how much aid and comfort they can be to a teacher, or what heartaches and grief they can cause. Also, it has been truly said many times by teachers that the upbringing and home life of a child can be quite well figured out by the child's actions in school. As is Johnny the child at home, so is Johnny the pupil in school.

However, all parents and teachers will agree that no matter how large or small a family, there is usually a wide difference of characteristics among the children. Some may be easy to teach and will take home good report cards; others may be slow and disinterested in school, or be problems in discipline. The so-called child experts of our modern era have studied this difference in children and have not yet come up with an answer. They probably never will.

Let's go back to our own school days. How did we behave in school? Did it not depend much on the teacher?

Did we whisper if it was forbidden? Cheat? Abuse the smaller pupils? Sass the teacher? Not if we knew we'd be punished for our misdeeds.

And now, years later, which teacher do we respect as a good teacher, the one who was lax in discipline, or the teacher who "ran a tight ship"?

Different Routes to the Same Goal

There is only one way to win the respect of the pupils: be fair and firm in your rules. Prove to them that you are genuinely interested in their educational, physical, and personal welfare. Tell them how it hurts you to punish a wrong doer. Remind them that their parents want them to behave and that it is your duty to enforce rules. The children will understand and respect you if you show them your sincerity.

Although all teachers agree that good discipline is a must in our schools, very few use the same methods to achieve it. Rules vary widely in different schools. Some teachers permit whispering; others are very much opposed to it. Some overlook running and shouting in the school building during recesses and noons. There are teachers who see nothing wrong in letting one pupil help another with lessons without permission.

Visiting different schools will show that of all the different methods of school teaching, nowhere else is there so much variation as there is in what is allowed and what is forbidden. For that reason we will not recommend or condemn any teacher's system of rules. The important thing is successful results.

For example, one veteran teacher allows her pupils to whisper—providing they are helping each other. This teacher trusts her pupils and they seemingly get along quite well. Another teacher allows but one at a time to whisper, and then only if it's about school work. However, the majority of teachers have a definite rule, "No whispering," though they find whispering a hard thing to eliminate entirely.

Because of the wide difference in rules and discipline, one must hesitate before endorsing any certain plan. We have seen too many qualified teachers allow, and take for granted, certain things that others would consider punishable offences. One thing that can be said without hesitation is that the less noise there is in the schoolroom, the better your pupils can study and concentrate.

Schoolroom Traffic

From my own experience and from a personal viewpoint, I would strongly recommend that pupils should remain in their desks during school hours. This may not be as hard as it sounds. What reasons does a pupil have to leave his desk? Granted a pupil can find a hundred and one excuses for leaving when he gets fidgety and has the urge to roam around: but getting right down to cases, if the right rules are made and followed, there is very little excuse for Johnny to be roaming around. Here may be a few suggestions on how to eliminate some of their reasons for going on a hike during class hours.

1. Use recess for going to the toilet, sharpening pencils (pencil sharpeners can be noisy!), drinking water, getting library books.
2. Ask parents to provide dictionaries to keep in desks.
3. If the pupils have questions, allow only

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one at a time to come to your desk. While on your feet and not holding classes, have pupils raise their hands if they have a question for you to answer.

Do these rules seem too strict and harsh? They have been in effect in the past and are still being used with good results in many schools.

As soon as the pupils know that they are not allowed to sharpen pencils, leave the room, get library books, or drink water in school time, they will adjust themselves to it in a hurry and arrange their work accordingly. If a pencil lead breaks (as they do occasionally), give the child a little stub of a pencil you found and no one has claimed. (There usually are plenty of these in a teacher's desk.)

Leaving the room? If a pupil is physically unable to stay away from the toilet less than an hour and a half it must be due to an illness or condition that needs attention from the doctor. Of course, a temporary condition can arise suddenly, such as an epidemic of intestinal flu or similar ailments. In this case the teacher must overlook the rule.

I will relate the experience I had during about the fifth or sixth term of teaching. Up until then I had allowed this traffic back and forth, although I often had serious reason to doubt it was justified. Why, I wondered, did so many suddenly get the urge to leave the room when someone was outside unloading wood? Why did it bother them more on nice sunny days than on rainy days? Over in the third and fourth row there might be no, "May I leave the room?" for quite a while, when suddenly everyone had to go. My helper and I knew much of this was uncalled for, but how to prove it?

Cutting Down on Leaving the Room

We tried psychology. One morning I got up and made a speech on this business of leaving the room. I stressed the point that it was morally wrong to ask to go out if it wasn't necessary, for this was almost a fib. I pleaded and begged for them to be honest about it, and to use the toilets at noon and recess. This helped a lot for awhile, and there were many days when no one asked to go out. But gradually, as such things are wont to do, the traffic began to increase again.

Once more I repeated my speech in front of the room, but before long it was the same story. It was time, we decided, to use drastic action.

About that time we had one of our regular six-weeks teachers' meetings. The subject of toilet traffic came up for discussion. We were at our wits end once more and I wondered what would happen if we simply put a "No" to it during school hours. One of the teachers seemed surprised that we would allow the pupils to leave the room.

"Don't you?" I asked.

"No," was the answer.

"How does it work? Any reaction from the parents?"

"No, there is no trouble anywhere. It works fine."

We decided to wait until board meeting evening to take it up with the board members. No objections. Our next step was to send home to each family a duplicated letter explaining our problem and our intention to curb this "leaving the room" business. We urged all parents to use their persuasive powers on their children so that they would be honest in school about this thing. Also, we stressed that we didn't want to be the reason for an accident at school, especially among the small set, and that if their children had an illness or condition that they thought would warrant leaving the room, they should write a note to us.

The new rule went into effect the next morning. The pupils took it in stride and did not seem worried about it. One thing we did notice was that the toilets were used more during noon and recess. To help matters we started a five-minute bell at noon. One "dong" and they would all go either to the toilet or to the water fountain or both.

With our biggest worry, the first and second graders, we simply used large doses of oral persuasion several times daily for a few weeks until they acquired the habit of going at noon and recess.

The results were astounding. As water is turned off at a faucet, so the toilet traffic was stopped. Only when someone was sick or other abnormal conditions developed, did anyone leave the room. The entire school benefited from this new rule, and we had a much quieter group.

Any walking around the schoolroom by pupils causes some disturbance. Drinking water, leaving the room, sharpening pencils, getting library books and dictionaries are all unnecessary during school hours and can be attended to during recesses and noon. For-

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bidding such walking will make a much quieter schoolroom, which in turn will keep the teacher's nerves and blood pressure on an even keel.

Whispering: Yes or No?

Now, what about whispering? This subject has been discussed and tossed back and forth in "The Blackboard Bulletin", at teachers' meetings, and in circle letters. Should or should it not be allowed?

A case may be made for "limited" whispering. By that we mean only a few pupils at a time, and only about school lessons. If you can conduct a good quiet school while allowing limited whispering, well and good. However, if this creates too much disturbance and you suspect the whispering may be about things other than "legal" questions, you can then impose a strict "No Whispering" rule in your school. Experience has taught many teachers that it is hard, if not impossible, to control whispering by allowing a "little" of it and no more. It has always been a mystery to me how a busy and harried teacher could possibly know what Martha and Fanny are talking about at the other corner of the schoolroom.

Moral: Allow no whispering whatsoever. It is easier to outlaw it completely than to control it.

The Thankless Duty

Modes of punishment for infraction of school rules range from a sharp reprimand to a paddling. Usually a rebuke, or even a "look" from the teacher will do the trick. If not, then stronger measures may be used. Keeping the offender at his desk during noon or recess while the others are playing is quite effective.

In talking with teachers, one learns that all sorts of punishments are used. The main thing to remember is to fit the punishment to the crime, and to do it in a spirit of humility. Using the paddle should come only as a last resort after all other measures have been tried and have failed. No one likes to paddle his own child, much less someone else's.

However, once in a while a teacher will meet up with a case where the paddle is needed, much as you abhor it. "Wouldn't it be nice" we have told ourselves many times, "if we never would have to punish anybody anymore?" Indeed it would be, but let's not allow this attitude to overbalance the need for firmness. If we do, we are asking for future trouble.

About as humbling an experience as a teacher can have is when a problem child is quite severely punished for a serious offense, and he reforms immediately, turning from a stubborn, deceitful troublemaker to a well-behaved boy. Such cases may be rare, but they have occurred. For example, Chester was a problem from the start. Nothing was too naughty for him to do. He was warned a few times, but this helped only momentarily. One day the teacher's patience was exhausted, and much as he hated to do it, he gave Chester a strapping at recess.

When noon hour came the pupils took their lunch buckets and marched outside to eat. Teacher sat on a bench, usually somewhat alone. This noon Chester came over, sat down beside the teacher to eat his lunch, and for the first time that year he opened up and carried on a friendly conversation with the teacher. From that day on to the end of his school days, "bad boy" Chester was an ideal pupil in every way.

One thing we do not find in a child's make-up is the ability to hold a grudge. There simply is no room in his heart for that: that little heart is overflowing with forgiveness. A teacher need not fear anything like "getting even" from a punished child if the punishment was deserved and given in the proper spirit.

The Mistaken Idea of, "They Need a Man"

Many times we have heard this comment when parents were talking about an unruly school: "What they need there is a man for a teacher." How much substance is there to the widespread belief that men are more strict and run better-disciplined schools than their lady counterparts? Not much, if any.

This mistaken notion seems to be based on appearance more than anything else. That is exactly the reason why it is wrong to presume that school children fear a man teacher more than a woman.

Let's hope that no child was ever "afraid" of a teacher. Teachers have too many personal contacts, and are too close to the interests of the child to be considered a feared enemy. If a teacher can prove he is a friend of his pupils, if he can win their confidence, no child is going to be "scared" of him.

Furthermore, a teacher who would not feel hurt if he knew some of the pupils were actually afraid of him has the wrong attitude.

Being afraid to break rules is another matter. That fear should be the same as the fear we have in our hearts to sin. Let's make the distinction—school children need to be afraid to do wrong in school, not because of a personal fear of the teacher, but because of their own consciences. They should have been taught at home that once they are in school, the teacher takes over the parents' responsibility. A child who has the idea implanted in his conscience that the teacher is the "parent" in school, and is to be obeyed at all times, will seldom cause trouble for the teacher, whether a man or a woman.

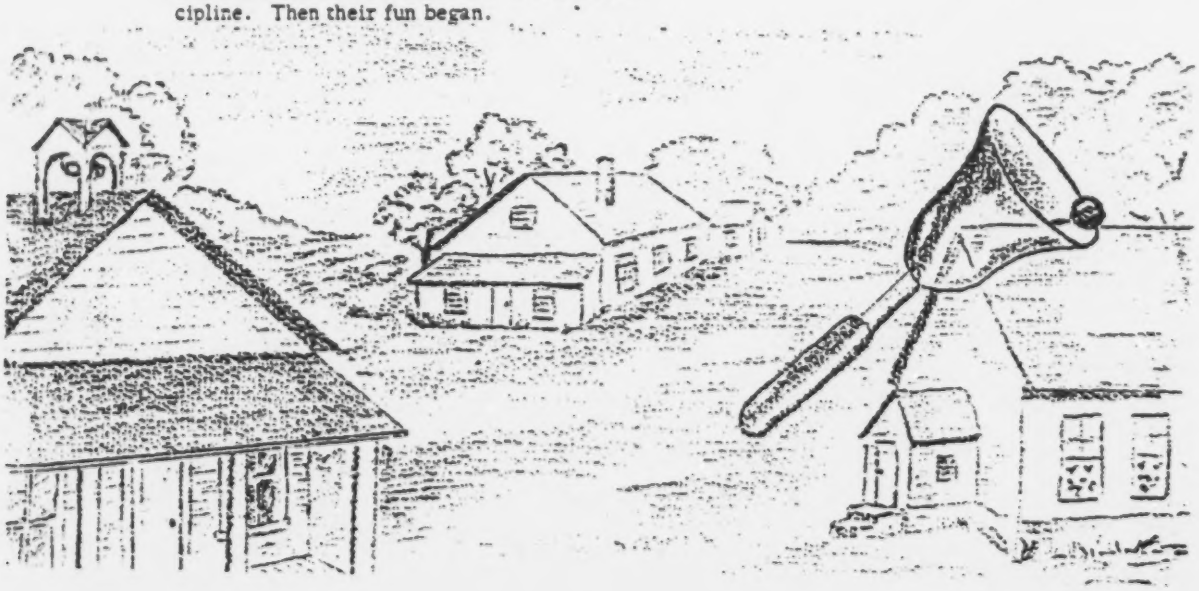
Look around at the schools with which you are acquainted. Let your mind wander to bygone schools and compare their discipline problems. Then you will probably realize there is very little basis for thinking, "If that unruly school down there had a man, its discipline problems would vanish."

Certainly, you know of rough and rowdy schools where a man was in charge, and also of good schools where a woman was teacher. It's a good guess that in the former case the children were a little skeptical what they could or could not do at first, until they found out that this man teacher was soft on discipline. Then their fun began.

Many women teachers have been a surprise to troublesome pupils who may have been misled by a benign and calm appearance. Blessed is the teacher, man or woman, who keeps the voice and actions even, and in a quiet and purposeful way maintains law and order in school!

A school's success depends not so much on whether a man or woman is in charge as it does on the individual himself, his character, and his courage to enforce the rules he has made.

There is one suggestion, though, that would help a young woman teacher who is just starting. The board would be well advised to appoint a superintendent to back her if she needs him. This man would be the trouble shooter in truancy cases. He would serve as a go-between if any difficulty should arise with parents, and act as the teacher's adviser and helper in severe discipline problems. However, in a Christian school, such problems should be rare.



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Other helpful sections from School Bells Ringing include sections on Reading, Arithemtic, Spelling, Getting the Most From History, Why Study Geography, The Study of English, and Health. (pp. 20-38)

Amish textbooks are also available from Pathway Publishers. Included in these materials is a copy of a story taken from the fourth grade reader Building Our Lives.

ACTIVITIES FOR AN AMISH SCHOOL DAY

READING

Assignment: Read "The Robber" (pp. 447-457 Building Our Lives). Complete the worksheet (pp. 82-82 of accompanying workbook).

Guidelines for the teacher (See p.23 of School Bell Ringing) "The secret is to have each pupil read a page or so and if a word comes up that cannot be pronounced correctly by the pupil, one of the better students may say it for him. It is important here to let the reader try to sound out the word first, and his classmates should never be too hasty in helping him. This has a tendency to worry the reader and may hinder him instead of helping.

If the class encounters a word that none of the pupils know, the word should be written on the blackboard. Then when they are finished, the teacher can divide the word into syllables with all the diacritical marks and ask the class to pronounce it."

Class discussion

1. Why was the book so important to Chester?
2. Who would buy chestnuts from Mr. Jackson? How would they be used?
3. Why did Chester change his mind about gathering the hickory nuts?
4. Do you think Chester will get the book? If so, how?

HISTORY

Using a source such as 20 Most Asked Questions About the Amish and Mennonites or Isobel Arvin's research paper, Amish Community Bulding in Indiana, read

together with the class a brief history of the Anabaptists movement, the persecution of the Amish during the 16th century in Europe, and their migration to the new world. If your class is representing a specific settlement in its simulated school day, use the information from Arvin's research paper depicting the migration of the Amish to that particular Amish settlement.

GEOGRAPHY

Give the students an outline map of Indiana's counties. Have them color in counties where Amish settlements are found. Indiana's major Amish settlements are located in:

	Founding Date
1. Marshall-Kosciusco-Elkhart Counties	1841
2. Howard-Miami Counties	1848
3. Allen County	1852-53
4. Adams County	1852
5. Daviess County	1868-69

ARITHMETIC

Arithmetic should be related to the everyday life of the Amish--it should be viewed by the Amish student as a tool that will be used everyday.

Some math books have exercises that are of little value to the Amish. Problems dealing with auto insurance, stocks and bonds, and symmetric designs are a waste of time and of little value to the Amish.

It is important to stress the fundamentals of the basic operations, measurement, percentages, and ratios. Discount and interest problems are important.

Arithmetic activities could include:

--Measure the area of the classroom or playground.

--Measure the number of square feet of wall space in the room and figure how much paint it would take to cover it.

--Use twine 100 feet long to mark off an acre on the school yard. Compute the total acreage of the school ground.

--Figure the price of a cow sold at a community sale, the commission, net proceeds, and rate of commission.

--Figure how much money can be saved by paying cash rather than paying in installments.

--Figure the value of buying at discount prices.

SPELLING

The following list of words could be used for spelling:

1.	Anabaptist	refers to people who do not believe in infant baptism
2.	Ordnung	a set of religious rules followed by Amish people
3.	bishop	the minister who is the leader of the community's church
4.	English	the name used by Amish to refer to anyone who is not Amish
5.	kerosene	a fuel used by some Amish for light
6.	propane	a bottled gas used in stoves
7.	scholars	students attending grades 1-8
8.	prayer cap	a cap worn at all times by Amish women who believe the head must be covered when praying
9.	Pennsylvania Dutch	a dialect spoken by Amish people in their home
10.	shunning	the practice of excluding anyone who does not follow the rules of the church

Before starting the lesson, announce, "Let's have a quiet room and stay at your desks."

To present the spelling lesson:

--Write the word on the chalkboard.

--Divide it in syllables.

--Pronounce it clearly and ask each scholar to pronounce the word.

--Use the word in a sentence and tell its meaning.

--Require the scholars to write each word 3 times.

--If you wish, have a spell-down.

ENGLISH

English is a vital subject in Amish schools. Many families speak Pennsylvania Dutch at home. It is important for Amish children to learn English to prepare for their dealings with their non-Amish neighbors. It is important for Amish to write business letters and mail orders. Textbooks are not recommended before fifth grade.

The English lesson for the day could be:

--Select an ad found in The Budget

--Write a letter ordering an advertised item. Stress the importance of correct capitalization, puncutation, and spelling.

An alternate lesson: (as suggested p. 34 School Bells Ringing)

The day before the Amish school day. . .
"Have pupils copy a few pages from some book, preferable a reader, without using anything but bare words: no capital letters, no periods, no commas, questions, or exclamation marks." The teacher takes up the papers. The papers will be distributed during the day of the Amish school. The scholars will rewrite the papers correctly without consulting the book. The scholars can then exchange papers, get out their books and check each other's work.

(Interesting comments on the teaching of English in Amish schools may be found on pages 34,35 School Bells Ringing.)

HEALTH

From School Bells Ringing, p. 38.
"In teaching health effectively, the teacher will rely quite a bit on his powers to speak to the class. A good lecture on a certain subject, for instance, on how to have clean teeth, or eating sensibly, usually makes quite an impression on a

> class. . .In looking over the many health books that are on the market, we find that the older editions seem to fit our schools best. A teacher should thoroughly examine the health books before issuing them to the pupils, for the simple reason that some of the modern books can do more harm than good."

At recess time children may play baseball, basketball, or take part in organized games such as kick-the-can.

A debriefing session should be held the day following the Amish school day. During this session:

--Discuss the kind of stories read by Amish children.

--Discuss why Amish children read this kind of story.

--Stress the idea that <u>values</u> are taught at school.

--Discuss the reasons for doing arithmetic problems related to everyday experiences.

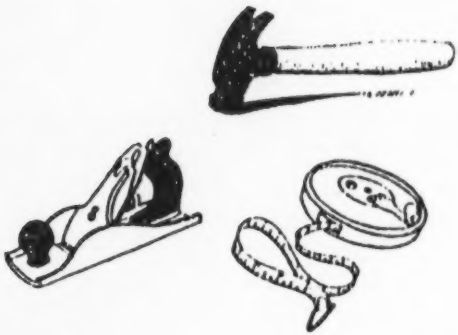
--Illicit the class's reaction to the discipline in the Amish classroom. Discuss advantages, disadvantages and reasons for such behavior.

--Draw inferences as to why Amish do not attend school past eighth grade.

--Discuss the importance of the Supreme Court decision allowing Amish to have separate schools and the exemption of Amish children from compulsory attendance laws.

--Discuss the ramifications of not attending high school and college.

BUILDING OUR LIVES



The Robber

Chester Zook held the book lovingly in his hands. He fingered its smooth pages and admired the glossy pictures. It was just the book he wanted — a book of wildlife. "But why does it cost so much?" he thought gloomily. The price tag on the cover appeared harmless and small, but it was big enough to spoil Chester's joy as he

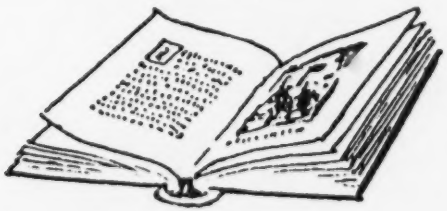
looked at it. "Six dollars and fifty cents, that's too much to pay for a book. Besides, I don't have that much. All I have is two dollars."

"Can I help you, son?" asked the owner of the store, Mr. Jackson.

"No, no, I guess not," replied Chester. "I was just looking." Quickly he replaced the book on the shelf and walked out.

All the way home Chester kept thinking about that book. "Maybe I could sell my rabbit," he thought. "But I hate to do that. Besides, I could only get about a dollar and a half for it, and then I would still only have three dollars and a half." Try as he would, Chester could think of no way to get enough money to buy the book he wanted.

Nearly a week later Chester's mother asked him to go to the village store one evening to buy a loaf of bread. As Chester entered Jackson's General Store, he tried



not to think about the books at the opposite end of the store. He went straight to where the groceries were and picked up the bread. Mr. Jackson himself was at the counter. He put the bread into a bag for Chester. "Is that everything?"

"Yes," Chester said. He paid for the purchase and took the bag from the store owner.

"Say," said Mr. Jackson, "you wouldn't happen to know where some hickory trees are, would you?"

"Yes," Chester said. "There are two at the edge of the woods behind our barn. I know because I've gone there to look for squirrels."

"You were hunting a little meat for the table, were you?" Mr. Jackson smiled.

"Oh, no," Chester said quickly. "My father doesn't care for squirrel meat, and besides, I like to sit and watch them too well to shoot them, I guess. But why did you ask about the hickory trees?"

"Oh, I just thought I would like to buy some hickory nuts if I could find them." Mr. Jackson paused and rubbed his chin. "Seems I always have customers asking for them."

"I'm sure I could bring you some," Chester said. "How many do you want?"

"I can use a lot. I don't think I'll get overstocked right away. Bring in as many as you can find. I'll be glad to pay you fifty cents a peck."

"Oh, thank you," exclaimed Chester. "I'm sure I can find a lot."

"Don't be too certain," laughed Mr. Jackson. "Your good friends may have beat you to them. They often do that."

"What do you mean?" asked Chester, looking puzzled. "Have you been buying them from my friends?"

"No, no," Mr. Jackson laughed still harder. "I mean the squirrels."

"Oh, I see," Chester laughed, too. "I'm not going to worry about them. A few squirrels can't eat very many nuts. I'm sure there will still be some left for me."

As he hurried from the store, Chester was still chuckling to himself about how Mr. Jackson had called the squirrels his friends. "I guess they are my friends," Chester thought as he walked home. "I hope they won't mind sharing with me."

Eagerly Chester told his mother what Mr. Jackson had offered him. "Maybe I

can run down and gather some nuts tonight yet," Chester said.

"Perhaps," Mother said, "but wash up for supper right now. We've been waiting to eat."

After supper Chester wiped the crumbs from his mouth and hurried outside. He grabbed two baskets and sped down the farm lane toward the woods. He didn't have to hunt for the first tree — he knew exactly where it was.

For a moment he thought there were no nuts under the tree. Then he saw that they were partly hidden in the tall grass. Going to work, Chester soon had one basket filled. He hunted until he had enough for a second basket. It was nearly dark as he went home, his arms aching from the weight of the baskets.

Each evening after school he rushed back to the woods to hunt for hickory nuts.

Mr. Jackson was surprised to see all the nuts that Chester brought in. "You must have the squirrels helping you gather them," he said. "Where do you get them all?"

"I just hunt for the trees," Chester said, glad that Mr. Jackson was pleased.

"How many more do you think you can bring me?" Mr. Jackson asked.

"I don't know if I can find any more or not," Chester answered slowly. "I had to hunt a long while for the last basket. I need two more, so I'm going to hunt and hunt until I find them."

"What do you mean, you need two more?" Mr. Jackson asked.

"Then I'll have enough money to buy something I want."

"Oh, now I see why you've been working so hard every evening. Well, I hope you find the nuts."

Slipping to the rear of the store, Chester checked if the book was still there. It was! As he walked home, Chester thought about how badly he wanted that book with wildlife pictures. Somehow, he just had to find two more baskets of hickory nuts.

"Seems like I've searched the whole woods from one end to the other," he mused.

Nevertheless, the next evening he bravely grabbed two baskets and hiked toward the woods.

First he checked all the trees where he had gathered nuts earlier, but he found on-

ly a few that had dropped since then. After he looked in vain for a long time, he scrambled up to a rocky ledge not far from a big hickory tree. To his surprise he stumbled on a hollow that extended back under the ledge, a hollow as big as a small-sized cave. It was half full of dry leaves. As Chester reached inside, he felt some small round objects on the cave floor. He brushed aside the leaves with his hand. "Ha, here's a find!" he exclaimed, when he saw what he had uncovered. The whole bottom of the hollow was lined with big hickory nuts.

"But how did these nuts get here?" Chester stopped to think for just a moment. "Oh, of course, some squirrel dragged them in. Well, I'm in luck this time." He set to work to fill his baskets. There were just enough nuts to fill both of them to the brim.

As Chester rose to his feet, he heard a shrill chattering not far away. Looking up, he saw a grey squirrel perched on a branch of the hickory tree, protesting shrilly. Chester hesitated.

"How would I feel if a big giant came and stole all my things?" Chester thought. For

a moment the idea troubled him. He knew he was like a big giant to the squirrel. "Oh, well," he thought, shaking his head. "Mr. Squirrel doesn't own these nuts. He robbed them from our trees to start with." Grabbing the handles of the baskets, Chester was off.

That night he dreamed that a squirrel was scolding outside his window. It was only a shutter scraping, but it awakened Chester and he lay for some time thinking about the shallow cave and the nuts.

The next morning he did not have the heart, somehow, to take the nuts to the store. All that day he thought about the angry little squirrel's face that peered down at him from the limb of the tree.

The second night it snowed silently for hours, and by morning there was a deep snow on the ground. At breakfast Chester looked up from his oatmeal and cream.

"Father, will this snow hurt things?" he asked.

"Oh, no," said his father, "it's good for the wheat and..."

"I mean animals. Will it....will it hurt them?"

"The animals will stay in the barn. They don't mind."

"I mean wild things, like — like birds," stammered Chester, looking hard at his spoon.

"Birds? Oh, no. The birds that mind snow have gone south for the winter by now."

"But...but...the squirrels." At last the right word was out.

His father laughed. "We don't have to worry about the squirrels. If the squirrels didn't know enough to store a good supply of nuts, they have no one to blame but themselves."

"No one to blame but themselves." The words ran around in Chester's mind. "No one to blame — but it wasn't true. There was someone to blame."

Chester shoved away his oatmeal. "I have something important to do," he mumbled as he left the table.

Plowing his way through the fresh, loose snow was hard work with two baskets of nuts. But Chester didn't slow down until he reached the woods. Then he paused, thinking about the book at the store — the wildlife book he wanted so much. He shook his head. "No," he said to himself, "I won't back out now."

When he reached the rocky ledge, he saw by the tracks in the snow that a visitor had been there before him. It was easy to see that the squirrel, hoping against hope, had come back again and again to see if a single nut had been left.

Chester felt sorry for the squirrel. "It must be terribly disappointed," he thought.

The mouth of the little cave was choked with snow, but when Chester reached inside, he found the hollow dry. Pouring the nuts quickly into the hole, he covered them with leaves.

"Good," he said, as he straightened up. "I'm glad that's done." Just as he turned to go, there was a slight stir behind him.

Whirling around, he saw the squirrel perched on a limb, watching him. This time the little squirrel was silent, but his black eyes were keen with interest. He looked as if he could hardly wait for a chance to rush down and see what had happened.

"They're all back, old fellow!" Chester called. "Every single one of them. If you don't believe me, come and count them yourself."

As Chester hurried homeward through the deep snow, he heard the squirrel chattering loudly, but this time the chatter seemed to have a friendly sound.

Pathway Publishers
Aylmer, Ontario - LaGrange, Indiana

WORKING WITH WORDS / The Robber

Match the words in the word box with their meanings at the right.

muse
brim
shrill
dutiful
improvement
shipment
settlement
keen

1. willing to obey; doing what one is expected _____
2. the edge of a cup or bowl _____
3. goods being sent by ship, truck, or train _____
4. think in a dreamy way _____
5. sharp; eager _____
6. the settling of persons in a new country _____
7. high and sharp in sound _____
8. becoming better _____

Write the correct word on the blanks of these sentences.

1. ship - shipment

   Sometimes we _____ packages by express.

   The hardware store got a large _____ of lawn mowers.

2. agree - agreeable

   Mary enjoyed working with Esther because she was an _____ person.

   Levi did not _____ to buy new skates for his brother.

3. favor - favorable

   Joseph enjoyed doing a _____ for his mother.

   Father wants to plant corn if the weather is _____.

4. lazy - laziness

   _____ is a bad habit.

   Mr. Jones does not want to hire a _____ man.

5. joy - joyful - enjoy

   It was a _____ night when the shepherds heard the angels sing.

   We _____ having a picnic by the lake.

   It is a _____ to know that spring is coming.

THINKING ABOUT THE STORY / The Robber

Put a check mark (✓) in front of the correct answer to these questions.

1. What did Chester find in the store that he wanted very much?

( ) a. story book
( ) b. a pellet gun
( ) c. a book of wildlife
( ) d. a softball

2. Why didn't he buy it?

( ) a. His mother didn't let him.
( ) b. He didn't have enough money.
( ) c. Someone else bought it.
( ) d. He wasn't able to get back to the store for it.

3. What did Chester do to earn money?

( ) a. He gathered hickory nuts for the man at the store.
( ) b. He sold his rabbits.
( ) c. He gathered walnuts to sell.
( ) d. He mowed the lawn for his neighbors.

4. How much money did Chester get for each peck of nuts?

( ) a. 25¢
( ) b. $1.00
( ) c. 75¢
( ) d. 50¢
( ) e. 65¢
( ) f. 35¢

5. When did Chester gather the nuts?

( ) a. each morning
( ) b. on Saturdays
( ) c. each evening after school
( ) d. on Wednesdays and Thursdays

6. Where did Chester find the last nuts?

( ) a. in the neighbor's woods
( ) b. under a tree in the field
( ) c. in a hollow tree
( ) d. in a small cave-like hollow

7. Who had put the nuts there?

( ) a. the squirrels
( ) b. the chipmunks
( ) c. Chester's Dad
( ) d. the neighbors

8. Why didn't Chester sell these nuts?

( ) a. He couldn't get them.
( ) b. He knew the squirrels would get hungry if he took them.
( ) c. The storekeeper had enough.
( ) d. His father didn't let him.

9. Who had been the robber in this story?

( ) a. the squirrels
( ) b. Chester
( ) c. Chester's father
( ) d. the storekeeper

Visiting the Amish

Some Amish families, in an effort to supplement their incomes, will welcome groups into their homes. Some will serve meals and conduct tours of their settlement.

If you know someone who knows an Amish family, ask them to contact the family.

I have arranged two trips with an Amish family in Allen County. Our first trip was a Saturday trip. We toured the farm, sawmill, and the house. We rode in buggies, partook of an Amish meal, looked into an Amish school and observed life throughout the countryside.

After establishing the contact with this family, I approached them with the idea of bringing my class to their farm for an overnight. They agreed.

We arrived in the area around 2 PM Friday afternoon. The Grabers, our hosts, had arranged for us to visit the Amish School. Our students spent half an hour in the Amish school--asking and answering questions. At the end of the school day the bus from the public school picked up half of the Amish children. The other half had to wait for the buss's second run. My class played with those remaining Amish children on the playground.

We arrived at the farm in time to observe the sawmill in operation (without the use of electricity, of course) and to watch the family do evening chores. A number of the family's relatives rode in on buggies bringing food for our evening "picnic" in the sawmill. (It was raining!) After the picnic the Amish family sang many songs for us.

The family had planned for us to sleep in the sawmill, but since it was cold and rainy, they allowed us to take sleeping bags into their five-bedroom home.

Brave ones arose early enough to help milk cows in the morning. Everyone arose in time for a breakfast of sausage, biscuits, gravey, eggs, and hot cereal.

A wagon ride gave the class a glimpse of the community. Mr. Graber also agreed to go with us on the bus to visit an Amish brass shop and a harness shop. Back at the farmhouse, the class found another big meal waiting for them!

Twenty-five children and 17 adults were immersed in the Amish culture for 36 hours.

As a part of our follow-up activities each child wrote a thank you letter and an account of their experience. Their stories were copied and assembled into a booklets so that each child could have a remembrance of the trip.

Perhaps the best evaluation of the trip came from a student who wrote, "When you were singing, even though it was cold outside, your singing made me feel warm on the inside."

One of the family members who came in via buggy for the picnic told our principal that he would be interested in having a class visit. There are Amish willing to host visitors--if you can find them

Isobel Arvin

RESOURCES FOR TEACHING ABOUT THE AMISH

The Budget, 134 N. Factory Street, Sugarcreek, Ohio 44681
Phone (216) 852-4634
The Budget is a weekly newspaper published for the Amish and Mennonite Communities throughout the Americas. Correspondents from local settlements send weekly news for publication. Many inferences about Amish life can be made from reading the paper. Price: 50 cents per issue.

Cobblestone, the History Magazine for Young People. Volume 8 Number 11, November 1987.
Cobblestone Publishing, Inc., 30 Grove Street, Peterborough, NH 03458
This issue of Cobblestone is soley devoted to articles about the Amish. The articles are written for elementary students. Other resources for teaching about the Amish are listed.

People's Place Booklets:

This series of paperback books ($4.95 each) is available from People's Place Booklets, Main Street, Intercourse PA 17534. Good fourth grade readers can read the books. Middle School students would also find the books suitable for their reading level.

Booklet No. 1: 20 Most Asked Questions about the Amish and Mennonites, Merle and Phyllis Good, 1979.

Booklet No. 2 A Quiet and Peaceable Life, John L. Ruth 1985.

Booklet No. 3 Plain Buggies Amish, Mennonite, and Brethern Horse-Drawn Transportation, Stephen Scott, 1981.

Booklet No. 4 Quilts Among the Plain People, Rachel T. Pellman and Joanee Ranck, 1981.

Booklet No. 5 Cooking and MEMORIES, Phyllis Pellman Good, 1983.

Booklet No. 6 The Amish School, Sara E. Fisher and Rachel K. Stahl, 1986.

Booklet No. 7 Why do They Dress That Way?, Stephen Scott, 1986.

Booklet No. 8 The Amish Wedding and Other Special Occasions of the Old Order Communities, Stephen Scott, 1988.

Booklet No. 9 Living Without Electricity, Stephen Scott and Kenneth Pellman, 1990.

Booklet No.10 The Puzzles of Amish Life, Donald B. Kraybill, 1990

The following books are helpful for planning an Amish School Day for your class.

Byler, Uria R. School Bells Ringing. Alymer, Ontario: Pathway Publishing Corporation, 1980.
A manual for Amish teachers and parents. A helpful source for planning a typical Amish school day. Available from Pathway Publishers, R.R. 4 Box 266, Lagrange, IN 46761 (Current price $3.00).

Pathway Publishers, Building Our Lives, Lagrange, IN: Pathway Publishers, 1979.
A fourth-grade reading text used in Amish schools. Current price, $8.00. A pupil workbook is also available.

A catalog of Amish publications is available from Pathway Publishers, R.R.4 Box 266, LaGrange, IN 46761.